

Sunday, September 27, 2020 – Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

Trinity's Weekly Connection

Join us for live streaming of our "Virtual Worship" service for the Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost from Centennial Hall on Sunday, September 27 at 9:15 a.m. If you are unable to join us at that time, be welcome to access the service at your convenience via Trinity's YouTube channel. Instructions for that access are below.

Trinity is live streaming worship – how do I find it?

We are streaming our 9:15 a.m. "Virtual Worship" service on YouTube. To find it, do the following:

- Follow the home page link to "Virtual Worship" on Trinity's website, select "video" and you will be connected to the stream.

OR

- Go to YouTube, either by opening the app on your phone or by visiting the webpage on your computer.
- Search for 'Trinity Lutheran Church Grand Rapids.' The first option should be one with a picture of our cross tower (that is our channel).
- When you click on it you will be brought to our channel. If the service is live (from about 9:10 to 10:20 a.m. on Sunday morning) there will be a video with 'Live Now' on it.
- Simply click on the video and you will be connected to the stream.
- We also save past services in a play list called 'Rejoice Worship,' so you can view a past worship service at any time. It takes a couple of hours for the video to download on YouTube after worship ends.

If you have a YouTube account please subscribe to the channel. This will allow our videos to show up in your video feed and when we reach enough subscriptions allow us to change our YouTube url.

Prayer of the Day for 17th Sunday after Pentecost

God of love, giver of life, you know our frailties and failings. Give us your grace to overcome them, keep us from those things that harm us, and guide us in the way of salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Prayer for the Blessing of Teachers

God of wisdom, your Son came among us as a teacher. Send your blessing on all who are engaged in the work of education: give them clearness of vision and freshness of thought, and enable them so to train the hearts and minds of their students that they may grow in wisdom and be prepared to face the challenges of life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Trinity Members in Our Prayers

We pray for Trinity members Emily Albaitis and family, Fran Anderson, Dan Babin, George Bauer, Krysta Billock, Sherry Blair and family, Bob Carwell, Captain Karl Crist, Jack Danielson, Riley Day, John Derbin, Awilda Diaz, Lois Engel, Beth Engstrom, Ryleigh Fischer, Joe Fisher, Mike and Mari Franz, Mary Frick, Richard and Phyllis Gehl, Elena Griewahn, Adam Guigue, Craig Gunderson, Carol Welz-Gustafson, Alexander Hahn, Mark Hahn, Bob and Linda Heine and family, Jerry Hendricks, Bill Heyne, Carrie Hoeksema, Callan Hughes, Christopher Humphrey, Austin, Meredith and Theodore Johnson, Christopher Keller, Gayl Kessel, Susan Knoll, Jen Knowles, Susan Kwast, Logan Landon, Marilyn Leese, Bob and Cathy Luders, Judy Mallen, Roger Marks, Joyce McKenzie, Jill McKinney, Marilyn Mellema, Johnny Mielock, Moglia family, Michael Mulligan, Tim Neilson, Maddie Nojos, Roger Perham, Dan Pollert, Valeriano Ramirez, Jacqueline Riegling, Mark and Gayle Rohde and family, Lynn Rose, Petra Rotzell, Tiago Salina, Bishop Craig Satterlee, Marian Schaible, Carolyn Schaner, Chas Schaner, Chris Schomberg, Ilene Seadal, Karen Selle, Joan Sellman, Jim Searfoss, Michael Smith, David Smoes, Joyce Snyder, Courtney Steketee and family, Linda Taffs, Shirley Tedford, Jeremiah (JD) Thamban, Ted Turnage, Dale Volkerding, John Walls, Meghan Walls, Eric Wollen, Peyton Wollen, Rick and Michelle Wolner, Dave and Kathy Young, Susan Youngren, and Kathryn Zielinski.

17th Sunday after Pentecost

September 27, 2020

Jesus' parable about two sons who don't do what they say reveals surprises in the reign of God. In the reading from Ezekiel the people claim the ways of the Lord are unfair, while God offers repentance and new life. Paul urges us to look to Christ as a model of humility, putting the interests of others above our own. Nourished by the broken bread and shared cup, we offer our lives for the sake of our needy world.

FIRST READING: Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32

Ezekiel challenges those who think they cannot change because of what their parents were and did, or who think they cannot reverse their own previous behavior. God insistently invites people to turn and live.

¹The word of the Lord came to me: ²What do you mean by repeating this proverb concerning the land of Israel, "The parents have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge"? ³As I live, says the Lord God, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. ⁴Know that all lives are mine; the life of the parent as well as the life of the child is mine: it is only the person who sins that shall die.

²⁵Yet you say, "The way of the Lord is unfair." Hear now, O house of Israel: Is my way unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair? ²⁶When the righteous turn away from their righteousness and commit iniquity, they shall die for it; for the iniquity that they have committed they shall die. ²⁷Again, when the wicked turn away from the wickedness they have committed and do what is lawful and right, they shall save their life. ²⁸Because they considered and turned away from all the transgressions that they had committed, they shall surely live; they shall not die. ²⁹Yet the house of Israel says, "The way of the Lord is unfair." O house of Israel, are my ways unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair?

³⁰Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, all of you according to your ways, says the Lord God. Repent and turn from all your transgressions; otherwise iniquity will be your ruin. ³¹Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed against me, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel? ³²For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, says the Lord God. Turn, then, and live.

SECOND READING: Philippians 2:1-13

As part of a call for harmony rather than self-seeking, Paul uses a very early Christian hymn that extols the selflessness of Christ in his obedient death on the cross. Christ's selfless perspective is to be the essential perspective we share as the foundation for Christian accord.

¹If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, ²make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. ³Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. ⁴Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. ⁵Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,

⁶who, though he was in the form of God,

did not regard equality with God
as something to be exploited,
⁷but emptied himself,
taking the form of a slave,
being born in human likeness.
And being found in human form,
⁸he humbled himself
and became obedient to the point of death—
even death on a cross.

⁹Therefore God also highly exalted him
and gave him the name
that is above every name,
¹⁰so that at the name of Jesus
every knee should bend,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
¹¹and every tongue should confess
that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

¹²Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence, but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; ¹³for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

GOSPEL: Matthew 21:23-32

After driving the moneychangers out of the temple (21:12), Jesus begins teaching there. His authority is questioned by the religious leaders, who are supposed to be in charge of the temple.

[²³When [Jesus] entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, "By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?" ²⁴Jesus said to them, "I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. ²⁵Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?" And they argued with one another, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe him?' ²⁶But if we say, 'Of human origin,' we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet." ²⁷So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." And he said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

²⁸"What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.' ²⁹He answered, 'I will not'; but later he changed his mind and went. ³⁰The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, 'I go, sir'; but he did not go. ³¹Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. ³²For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him."

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Drawn together in the compassion of God, we pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.

A brief silence.

In all the world, give your church unity. Inspire all the baptized with the mind of Christ. Where the church is powerful and where it struggles, shape us with humility and obedience so that your love may be at work in us. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

God of partnerships, bless those who share in our ministry, including Pastor Leslie Nye and the people of Spruce Lutheran Church in Spruce, synod partners with us in mission and ministry. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Lord God guide us to a spirit of unity and harmony so that we may come to cherish our commonalities with people of other faiths. Bless our three "Standing Together" partner congregations here in Grand Rapids, Masjid At-Tawheed, Westminster Presbyterian Church and Temple Emanuel. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Your Son took on all of bodily life in our world, even to death. Preserve and keep your creation, O God. Mend and redeem places that are polluted and damaged, so that all of creation confesses you as Lord. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Turn the nations toward life. Where our ways are unfair, give us new hearts and new spirits. Where sin permeates our cultures and institutions, change our minds and teach us to trust your authority. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Our lives are yours, O God. Relieve the suffering of those who are ill in body, mind, or spirit, including those we name now in our hearts (*a brief silence*). Defend the lives and welfare of children who are abused or neglected, hungry or exploited, bullied or lonely. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Turn this congregation away from our own interests toward the interests of others. Fill us with your compassion and sympathy. Bless ministries of care in our community, including Trinity's Stephen Ministry care givers and our Trinity in Touch visitors; make us into signs of your mercy and justice for our neighbors. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Thank you for those who have gone into the kingdom ahead of us—tax collectors and prostitutes, likely and unlikely, obedient and slow to learn. By their witness, teach us to confess Jesus Christ as Lord in life and in death. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

All these things and whatever else you see that we need, we entrust to your mercy; through Christ our Lord.
Amen.



A Prayer for the Power of the Spirit among the People of God

God of all power and love, we give thanks for your unfailing presence and the hope you provide in times of uncertainty and loss. Send your Holy Spirit to enkindle in us your holy fire. Revive us to live as Christ's body in the world: a people who pray, worship, learn, break bread, share life, heal neighbors, bear good news, seek justice, rest and grow in the Spirit. Wherever and however we gather, unite us in common prayer and send us in common mission, that we and the whole creation might be restored and renewed, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayer for this time of closure and distancing

O God, where hearts are fearful and constricted, grant courage and hope. Where anxiety is infectious and widening, grant peace and reassurance. Where impossibilities close every door and window, grant imagination and resistance. Where distrust twists our thinking, grant healing and illumination. Where spirits are daunted and weakened, grant soaring wings and strengthened dreams. All these things we ask in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

SEPTEMBER 27, 2020
SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY
AFTER PENTECOST

taking† faith home

God directs our ways.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Matthew 21:23-32	Parable of the two sons
Monday	Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32	God's ways are fair
Tuesday	Philippians 2:1-13	Christ shows us humility
Wednesday	Exodus 17:1-17	Water from the rock
Thursday	Psalms 78:1-4, 12-16	What God has done
Friday	James 1:19-27	Hearing and doing God's word
Saturday	Psalms 25:1-9	Prayer for guidance and help
Sunday	Matthew 21:33-46	Parable of the vineyard tenants

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

"[W]ork out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure." **Philippians 2:12b-13 (NRSV)**

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Dear God, teach us to know your ways and to do them with humility and compassion for all that you have created through Christ our Lord. Amen. (Psalm 25:4)

Mealtime Prayer:

Good and gracious God, we thank you for providing for our every need, including the gift of this food; we pray through Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May God guide you in the way of truth and guard your life with steadfast love and faithfulness. (Psalm 25)



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SEPTEMBER 27, 2020

HYMN OF THE WEEK

*We Are All One in
Mission*

WEEKLY MILESTONES

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- Do you ask for help sometimes when making decisions? Why or why not?
- Is there a time when you asked for God's help in making a decision? If so, tell about it.
- How does reading the Bible and having conversations with other believers help guide your life?

DEVOTIONS

Read: Philippians 2:1-13.

The Apostle Paul speaks to the church at Philippi and encourages the people to live with others with humility (vv. 3-4). He uses Christ as our model for this way of life as Christ Jesus took on our human existence and "humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death" (v. 8). With this as a guide, Paul exhorts believers to pursue the Christian life because it matters to others, to the world, and to God. Knowing how hard it is to live this life faithfully, he states, "work out our salvation in fear and trembling" (v. 12b). But this is not a fear that prevents us from acting. It is actually a sense of awe and reverence that frees us to live and act because God is with us, behind and in front of us in both our actions and our very desire to do the will of God (v. 13). It can be overwhelming to wonder how to live as a Christian. Paul encourages us to go forth with humility to love others and trust God. Think of a situation that is hard for you to know what you should do. When this happens, pray to God for wisdom and faith to act with love and humility.

Pray: **God of justice and mercy, guide our days and our deeds in the peace of Christ. Amen.**

SERVICE

In Philippians 2, Paul is asking us to imitate Jesus by being of the same mind and showing compassion, love, and humility to others. Showing interest in others by listening and praying for them is one way to be compassionate. Be mindful of listening closely to the conversations you have with others.

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

Lifting our hands is one way to show praise to God. In the Old Testament there are people (like Leah and Moses) who lift their hands in praise to God. This is an ancient pose of prayer and a motion used to open a person to receiving God's blessing. Lift your hands and pray daily this week: **To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul. O my God, in you I trust. Amen.** (Psalm 25:1-2a)



In addition to *Taking Faith Home*, celebrate milestones in your daily life as an effective faith formation tool. Go to: www.milestonesministry.org